DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 117 706 CS 202 456

AUTHOR Lent, John A.
TITLE Malaysian Chinese and Their Mass Media: History and Survey.
PUB DATE Aug 74
NOTE 18p.; Reprinted from "Asian Profile," Vol. 2, No. 4, August 1974

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Broadcast Industry; *Chinese; Chinese Culture; *History; *Mass Media; News Media; *Newspapers; News Reporting; Periodicals; Publications; Radio; Television
IDENTIFIERS *Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The traditions of the Chinese press in Malaysia go back 160 years to Malaysia's first Chinese-language newspaper, considered by scholars as the first modern periodical anywhere. Since then, this press has aided Christian missionary efforts in China and Southeast Asia, helped develop permanent Chinese communities in the Malay peninsula, called for both reformist and revolutionary movements in China, fought against the Japanese during World War II, and supported the formation of a Malaysian state--all the while trying to retain valuable aspects of Chinese culture. Currently, the Malaysian Chinese community is served by 26 newspapers (23 are dailies), a few local magazines, a Chinese section of Radio Malaysia, and a daily Chinese newscast and limited drama on television. Readership of Chinese papers is the highest of any ethnic press in the country. In the future, most of the Chinese papers, falling under the ownership of Alliance government parties, will have to report according to government standards and, while Chinese broadcasts could be diminished because of language restrictions, it would be a long time before Chinese would be discarded as a broadcast language. (JM)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Asian Profile August 1974

Malaysian Chinese and Their Mass Media: History and Survey

JOHN A. LENT
Associate Professor of Communications
Temple University

ED117706

The overseas Chinese throughout Asia have understood the value of the mass media for commercial and political gain, this being attested to by the fact overseas Chinese are second only to Japan in newspaper diffusion rate – 97 copies of papers per 1,000 population. After Taiwan and Hong Kong, there is not another nation in the world where the Chinese press has played such a significant role as in Malaysia.[1] Its traditions in Malaysia go back to the very beginning of journalism in that nation. During its nearly 160 years, the Malaysian Chinese press has aided British missionaries in their attempts to Christianize China and Southeast Asia, helped develop permanent Chinese communities in the Malay peninsula, sounded the call for both reformist and revolutionary movements in China, fought against the Japanese during World War II and lent its support to the formation of a Malaysian state at the same time it has tried to retain valuable aspects of Chinese culture.

In multi-ethnic Malaysia, there are three times as many Chinese newspapers and twice the total circulation of the nearest rival, the English-language press.[2] And this tells only part of the story, for the Chinese, being the voracious readers that they are, make up a good part of the readership of the other language presses of Malaysia as well. As one writer recently put it, the Chinese "probably buy more papers either in Chinese or English than the rest of the Malaysian population put together."[3] Additionally, Chinese merchants pump more advertising revenue into the three main broadcasting units of Malaysia – radio, television and rediffusion – than any other ethnic group.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Malaysia's first Chinese-language newspaper is considered by foremost scholars (e.g., Lin Yutang, Reswell Britton) as the first modern Chinese periodical anywhere. Nine years after the English-language *Government Gazette* appeared in Penang as the nation's

1. Chang Kuo-sin. *A Survey of the Chinese Language Daily Press.* Hong Kong: Asian Programme, International Press Institute, 1968, pp.25-27.
2. This has been the case for a number of years. Betts, reporting 1965 figures, said the Chinese press accounted for 42.3 per cent of the total Malaysian newspaper circulation, followed by the English press, 30 per cent. (Russel H. Betts. "The Mass Media of Malaya and Singapore As of 1965: A Survey of the Literature." Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, December 1969, p. 95. See also: Tan Peng Siew. "Malaysia." In: John A. Lent, *The Asian Newspapers' Reluctant Revolution.* Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1971.)
3. Frances Dyer. "A Strong Tradition, But Concern Grows for the Future." *Leader: Malaysian Journalism Review.* No.1, 1974, p.4.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL BY MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY John A. Lent
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

CS 202 456

first newspaper, British missionary, William Milne on August 6, 1815, established the *Chinese Monthly Magazine or a Monthly Record of Social Manners* in Malacca. Designed to proselytize for Protestantism in China, the *Chinese Monthly* would have appeared in China had there not been a ban on missionaries there.[4] In Malacca, Milne, with the Chinese literature, workmen and printing materials he brought with him, set up the Anglo-Chinese Press which, between 1815 and 1842, published 62 Chinese titles totalling 117,299 copies, plus Malay and English works.[5] The *Chinese Monthly Magazine* survived six years, ceasing operations in 1821 at about the time Milne fell ill and died. Milne's own description of this pioneer periodical follows:

> The first specimens were very imperfect, both as to the composition and printing; but they were understood by persons who were in the habit of reading; and the Editor hoped that a fuller acquaintance with the language would enable him to improve the style. It was originally intended that this little publication should combine the diffusion of general knowledge with that of religion and morals; and include such notices of the public events of the day as should appear suited to awaken reflection and excite inquiry. To promote *Christianity* was to be its *primary* object; other things, though they were to be treated in subordination to this, were not to be overlooked. Knowledge and science are the hand-maids of religion, and may become the auxiliaries of virtue. To rouse the dormant powers of a people, whose mental energies are bound up by that dull and insipid monotony which has drawn out its uniform line over them to the length of more than twenty hundred years – will be no easy task. Means of all justifiable kinds, laborers of every variety of talent, resources sufficient for the most expensive moral enterprises, and a space of several ages – will all be necessary to do this effectually. But a beginning must be made by some people, and in some age of the world. After generations will improve on what the present race of men begin. It is better therefore to commence a good work with very feeble means and imperfect agents, than to 'sigh to the wind' and not attempt it at all. Thus, though that variety of subject intended to be published in the Chinese Monthly Magazine, could not be all brought in at first, or indeed to the present moment; yet that was not considered an argument of sufficient weight to postpone the work. Mr. M (ilne) therefore composed such papers for it as his time, talents, and other circumstances admitted of. The essays and papers published. . .have been chiefly of a religious and moral kind. A few essays on the most simple and obvious principles of astronomy, instructive anecdotes, historical extracts, occasional notices of great political events, etc., have at times given a little variety to its pages; but there has been less of these than could have been wished. . .for the first four years, everything published, with the exception of a few pages, proceeded from the pen of a single individual, who was also engaged in a variety of other labors. To render this work generally interesting, it would require a full half of the time and labor of a Missionary – time and labor well bestowed too – and should unite the productions of various pens. . .The size of the Chinese Magazine has never yet exceeded that of a small tract, and it has been given away gratis. For about three years, five hundred copies were printed monthly and circulated, by means of friends, correspondents, travellers, ships, etc., through all the Chinese settlements of the eastern Archipelago; also in Siam, Cochin-China, and part of China itself. At present (1819), a thousand copies are printed monthly. The demands and opportunities for circulation greatly increase, and it is likely that in three or four years more, 2,000 will be an inadequate supply. Besides the regular monthly numbers, complete sets for each year have been printed as they were required. . .[6]

Two years after Milne's death, his colleague, Robert Morrison, brought out what was to be a weekly Malacca magazine, but it survived one issue. Morrison moved to Macao where he started a periodical while another Milne cohort, Walter H. Medhurst, was responsible for starting one of Batavia's earliest publications in 1823.[7] The Anglo-Chinese Press,

---

4. Roswell Britton. *The Chinese Periodical Press 1800-1912.* Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh, Ltd., 1933, p.17.
5. Cecil K. Byrd. *Early Printing in the Straits Settlements 1806-1858.* Singapore: Singapore National Library, 1970, p.9.
6. As quoted in Britton, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-25.

before it moved to Hong Kong in 1843, published the second continuous Chinese periodical in Malacca, *Tien Hsia Hsin-wen*, or *Universal Gazette*, edited by Samuel Kidd in 1828-29. Another missionary press in Singapore[8] produced the periodicals, *Tifang Jih Pao (Local News)* in 1845 and *Jit Sheng (Rising Sun)* in 1858,[9] but after their early demise, there was not another Chinese paper in Singapore, Malacca or the whole of Southeast Asia until the successful *Lat Pau (Selat News)* was initiated in Singapore in 1881. Chen attributed this drought in Chinese newspapers to the relatively few Chinese in the Straits Settlements (34,000 of the total 112,000 population in 1842), the high illiteracy rate and the lack of familial units among the Chinese. It was after 1850 that one witnessed the large-scale movement of Chinese into the peninsula.[10]

It might be justifiable to think of *Lat Pau* as the first Chinese newspaper in what is now Malaysia. Operated by a wealthy merchant, See Ewe Lay, it was the first newspaper created and published by a Chinese. Although the paper lasted 51 years, finally facing liquidation in 1932, *Lat Pau* was not without problems, chief of which were recruitment of staff and gathering of authentic news. Because Chinese intellectuals were not willing to leave the homeland for the Straits Settlements, See relied on translations from Chinese newspapers of Hong Kong and Shanghai, the local English-language press and agents throughout Southeast Asia for his news content. The resultant stories sometimes stretched credulity. For example, on November 7, 1889, Lat Pau reported a story from a Tientsin paper about a tremendous spider killed by lightning whose claws were as "large as spear-heads and it appears to have lived for hundreds of years."

The first 80 years of Chinese journalism in the Straits Settlements were not very fruitful. Newspapers were started on a hit or miss proposition, not oriented so much toward the local Chinese community as to foreign missionaries, not interested so much in creating a local Chinese public opinion as to report on activities (some as frivolous as the spider story above) in China. The situation changed drastically, however, during the next period, 1895-1911, which Lin Yutang called the golden age of Chinese journalism.[11] As Singapore became a rendezvous for political refugees from China, e.g., Sun Yat-sen, Wang Ching-wei and Hu Han-min, a public opinion press, espousing the causes of either the reformists or revolutionaries, was the result.[12] The reformists had newspapers such as *Thien Nan Shin Pao* of Singapore or *Pinang Sin Poe*, while revolutionary journalists Teo Eng Hock and Tan Chor Lam were responsible for *Thoe Lam Jit Poh* and *Nanyang Chung Wei Pao (Union Times)*, both of Singapore. Still other Singapore Chinese papers at the turn of the century were *Chong Shing Yit Pao*, *Sing Po* and *Jit Shin Pau*. The rivalry was so keen that as many as three dailies were published simultaneously for the Singapore Chinese.

---

8. For information on other mission presses and their periodicals during this period, see: Elizabeth Malcolm. "The *Chinese Repository* and Western Literature in China 1800 to 1850." *Modern Asian Studies*. 7:2 (1973), pp.165-78; Malcolm. "A Study of the *Chinese Repository* 1832-1851." Thesis, University of New South Wales, 1960.
9. Byrd, *op. cit.*, p.17.
10. Chen Mong Hock. *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore, 1881-1912*. Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1967, p.13.
11. Lin Yutang. *A History of the Press and Public Opinion In China*. Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh, Ltd., 1936, p.80.
12. Victor Purcell. *The Chinese in Malaya*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967, p.209.

When the revolutionaries exhausted their Singapore resources, they moved on to Penang. Sun Yat-sen resided in Penang in 1910-11, during which time he helped found *Kwong Wah Yit Poh*, which still survives. *Kwong Wah* was Sun's main propaganda vehicle during its early years. The paper benefitted from the misfortunes of two other Chinese newspapers – one in Burma, the other in Japan. A paper by the name *Kwong Wah* (literally, "re-establishing the status of the Chinese") was closed down by the Rangoon government whereupon its publisher, Chung Yin Aun, brought his machinery to Penang for Sun's use. Within a year (1911), the Penang *Kwong Wah* was in deep financial trouble; this time it was bailed out by the proceeds of *Min Pao*, a paper forced to close in Japan, donated to *Kwong Wah* by Chang Thai Yen, Min Pao publisher, *Kwong Wah* struggled along on donations and job printing, realizing its first profits in 1946.[13] Other newspapers set up in Penang or Kuala Lumpur during this "golden age" were *Hua Yang Hsin Pao* and *Yu Pao*, both in Penang, and *Nan Yang Shih Wu Pao* in Kuala Lumpur. Some of these newspapers had brief lives as indicated by this *Sing Po* editorial comment about *Nan Yang Shih Wu Pao:* "We were just congratulating ourselves that a Chinese paper had appeared in such a remote town (Kuala Lumpur). However, we were soon disappointed to learn that it had to close down after one month."[14]

The next period that saw a blossoming of Chinese newspapers in what was then Malaya was the twenty years just before World War II. For example, of the 44 Chinese papers in Malaya/Malaysia (excluding Singapore) published between 1815-1970, 11 were started between 1921-30 (nine of those in the 1928-30 period) and six others in 1931-40.[15]

---

13. "Thirty-Seventh Anniversary Edition," and "This Half Century – The Golden Anniversary Bulletin of *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* 1910-1960," both published by *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* in Penang. Also: Lee Kim Har. "A History and Survey of the *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* 1910-1945." Paper presented to John A. Lent's "Journalism II" course, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, January 1973.

14. Chen, *op. cit.*, p.143.

15. Lim listed 136 Chinese newspapers published in the Malaysian area between 1815-1970: 84 in Singapore, 23 in Kuala Lumpur, nine in Penang, five in Ipoh, five in Malaya (unspecified), one each in Taiping and Malacca and eight unspecified as to Malaya or Singapore. Lim obviously omitted some of the earlier Malaysian Chinese papers, listing only *Kong See Boo Pao, Pinang Sin Poe* and *Universal Gazette* in the nineteenth century, and all of the World War II and Communist emergency underground press. The 44 non-Singapore newspapers follow: Kuala Lumpur: *Chi Lung P'o Jih Pao*, daily, 1909-10; *China Press*, daily, 1946; *Chong Wah*, daily, 1946; *Chong Wah Evening Post*, daily, 1946; *Combatant's Friend*, 1947; *Federal Daily News*, daily, 1910; *Federated Malay States Daily News*, daily, 1910; *Feng Pao*, 1952-55; *Hsin Lu Pao*, 1951; *Hua Ch'iao Pao*, 1946; *Kong See Boo Pao*, daily, 1897; *Lien Pang Daily News*, daily, 1952-55; *Ma Hua Jih Pao*, daily, 1937-41; *Ma Lai Ya Chou Pao*, weekly, 1928-29; *Malayan Thung Pao*, daily, 1959; *Malaysia News*, 3 x week, 1964; *Min Sheng Pao*, 1945-48; *Nanyang Siang Pau*, Singapore and Malaysia daily, 1923; *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, daily, 1929; *Student Weekly*, weekly 1962; *Tiger Press*, daily, 1959-61; *Warta Malaysia*, 3 x week, 1964; *Yik Khuan Poh*, daily, 1921-35. Malaya (unspecified): *Chu Pao*, 1928; *Nan Ch'iao Jih Pao*, daily, 1929-30; *Pi Hua Jih Pao*, daily, 1939; *Shang Yeh Jih Pao*, daily, 1932-33; *Tao Sheng Chou Pao*, weekly, 1928-29.
Penang: *Ch'iao Sheng Jih Pao*, daily, 1930; *Chunan Morning Post*, 1930; *Chung Hua Kung Pao*, 1945-46; *Kwong Wah Yit Poh*, daily, 1910; *Modern Daily News*, daily, 1949-50; *Nan Yang Si Pau*, daily, 1920-30; *Pe Tou Pao*, 1946-48; *Pinang Sin Pao*, daily, 1895-1941; *Sing Pin Jih Pao*, daily, 1939.
Taiping: *Pe Ma Tao Pao*, 1945.
Malacca: *Tien Hsia Hsing Wen*, 1829.
Ipoh: *Chung Hua Ch'en Pao*, 1934-39; *Kin Kwok Daily News*, daily, 1940; *Lui Pao*, 1930; *P'i Li Jih Pao*, daily, 1930; *Shih Tai Jih Pao*, 1945. (Lim Pui Huen. "Newspapers Published in the Malaysian Area." Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, April 1970).

Some of this growth can be attributed to the accession of the Kuomintang to power in China during the mid-1920s, which, according to Cady, had profound changes on the typically apolitical attitude of Malay Chinese. Heretofore the Peking government had paid virtually no attention to the overseas Chinese; the new regime solicited the political and financial support for the Southeast Asian Chinese.[16] After 1930, the Malay Communist Party began wooing the Chinese and agitating against the British. Thus, as they had done during the "golden era," newspapers developed to support a movement: this time either Kuomintang or Communist. It might also be argued that the large number of Chinese women immigrants during the 1930s made for social cohesion which resulted in more newspapers. Surviving newspapers begun in this period were Penang's *Sing Pin Jih Pao*, developed by chain owner Aw Boon Haw in 1939; Ipoh's *Kin Kwok Daily News*, established in 1940 by Leong Chung Kuan, and the Singapore editions of *Nanyang Siang Pau* and *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, both of which circulated in Malaya until separate editions were created in 1962 and 1966 respectively. *Nanyang Siang Pau* started publishing in 1923 under the ownership of the multi-millionaire rubber magnate, Tan Kak Kee, while *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, instituted in 1929, was part of the newspaper empire of Tiger Balm king, Aw Boon Haw.

During World War II, the Japanese controlled the mass media of Malaya, and although they did not encourage the use of Chinese and Tamil, the Japanese *Shimbuns* published throughout the country did include pages in those languages. The occupation forces' radio network broadcast news in Hokkien and Cantonese and usually set aside a day or two a week for more extensive programming in these languages. Pre-war newspapers, such as *Sing Pin* in Penang, were taken over by the Japanese and their presses used to print Chinese and English editions of the *Shimbun*. Pre-war staffs either went into hiding or worked on underground periodicals. Although not generally recognized as part of Malaysia's press history,[17] the underground journalism of the occupation and succeeding Communist emergency periods was both lively and extensive. Hanrahan, for instance, reported 23 or more regularly-published newspapers of the Malay Peoples Anti-Japanese Army alone, 13 of which were in Chinese, five in English, four Tamil and one Hindustani.[18] Chapman, who edited underground newspapers in Malaya during the occupation, mentions still others.[19] Operating under severe conditions, these newspapers, crudely printed and cleverly distributed, provided readers their only chance to see the other side of the news – both during the occupation and emergency periods. *Suara Raayat*, for example, was a four-page cyclostyled weekly in a mixture of Jawi, Chinese, English and Tamil published from a cave during the war; others were printed on thin rice paper and distributed in tooth

16. John F. Cady. *Southeast Asia: Its Historical Development*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964, p. 453.
17. The underground press of Malaysia remains a sensitive topic. In numerous interviews with media personnel, my Universiti Sains Malaysia students and I were told there was no such press in Malaysia. We were discouraged from researching this aspect of Malaysian history.
18. Gene Hanrahan. *The Communist Struggle in Malaya*. New York: 1954, pp. 76-77.
19. F. Spencer Chapman. *The Jungle Is Neutral*. London: 1949, various pagings.

paste tubes, brain cavities of dried fish or bicycle handle-bars.[20]

As with most of Southeast Asia, there was a boom in newspaper publishing in Malaya immediately after the war. During 1945-47, at least ten Chinese newspapers were started in the country, including *China Press* (1946) which survives as Kuala Lumpur's oldest Chinese daily.

Besides the underground and mosquito newspapers, the emergency years in Malaysia produced the following surviving Chinese dailies: *Malayan Thung Pao*, 1959; and the East Malaysian *Sarawak Vanguard*, 1952; *Miri Daily News*, 1957; *See Hua Daily News*, 1952, and *Api Siang Pao*, 1954.

CONTEMPORARY SCENE

The Chinese community in Malaysia is served by 26 newspapers – 23 of which are dailies[21] – with a total circulation hovering near 500,000, a few local magazines, a Chinese section of Radio Malaysia and a daily Chinese newscast and limited drama on television.

Newspapers

Twelve of the Chinese newspapers are published in West Malaysia – eight in Kuala Lumpur and two each in Penang and Ipoh; the other 14 in the East Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak. Except for *Kin Kwok* in Ipoh (daily circulation 14,000; Sunday 40,500), Sabah and Sarawak. Except for *Kin Kwok* in Ipoh (daily circulation 14,000[22]; Sunday 40,500), all West Malaysian newspapers exceed 36,000 circulation, with *Shin Min Daily News* (76,603 daily; 90,000 Sunday) accounting for about half the total. In 1972, all West Malaysian Chinese papers, except *Nanyang Siang Pau* (Sunday edition) and *Shin Min* (daily and Sunday), showed circulation increases over the previous year. The other West

---

20. Cheah Kim Lean and Rodziah Ahmad Tajuddin. "Underground Press in Malaya During the Japanese Occupation and Emergency Period, 1942-1960." Paper presented to John A. Lent's "Comparative Media Systems" course, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, January 1974.
The authors in their interviews of underground journalists found evidence of the following Chinese guerrila papers: *Lenin News*, Perak; *Freedom News*, *Worker/Peasant News*, *Beacon News*, all in Johore; *Upset Press*, *Morning Bell*, *True News*, *War News*, *Zhen Bao*, *Student News*, all in Penang and Kedah; *Newspaper of the Masses*, *Charge*, *The Correspondents*, *The Volcano*, all in Negeri Sembilan and Malacca; *Battle News*, *Combatant News*, in Pahang. Still others: *Chia Fung Pau*, Chinese fortnightly version of *Emancipation News*; *Voice of the Malaya*, Malaya Communist Party organ; *Min Shin Pao*, four-page quarto-sized, mimeographed paper, succeeded by *Ko Ar Po*; *Chan Yu Pao*, MPAJA paper in Kuala Lumpur; *Min Yuen* (People's Movement); *Shen Tai Daily Press*, anti-British paper which closed in 1950; *Fan Sin Pao (Turning Over News)*, organ of Kedah-Penang Joint States Committee published in 1956, and *The Democrat*, official Communist weekly published by MCP leader Chen Ping in 1947-48.

21. Howard Coats and Frances Dyer. "The Print and Broadcasting Media in Malaysia." Kuala Lumpur: South East Asia Press Centre, December 1972, p.2.
The authors reported a total of 53 newspapers – 38 of which were dailies – in Malaysia for a total circulation of nearly 900,000.

22. All figures are for 1972. Coats and Dyer, *op. cit.*, p.31.

Malaysian dailies and their 1972 figures were: *China Press*, 36,000; *Malayan Tung Pao*, 50,000; *Sing Pin*, 39,000, and *Kwong Wah Yit Poh*, 40,000. *Shin Min* has had the most phenomenal growth, having doubled its circulation in a 1½ year period early in the 1970s. The paper's inaugural circulation in Malaysia in 1967 was 4,000.

Readership of Chinese papers is the highest of any ethnic press in the country. A 1971-72 survey[23] reported that eight Chinese dailies of West Malaysia were responsible for over 31 per cent of the total newspaper readership, *Nanyang Siang Pao* alone had nine per cent of the total[24] while *Shin Min* and *Sin Chew* each had six per cent. Of the other language newspapers, only the English *Straits Times* with 400,000 readers and Malay *Utusan Melayu* with 408,000 were in the same category.

Why do the Chinese control such a large proportion of the newspaper circulation while making up about 34 per cent of the population? While a number of reasons can be proffered, the main ones concern the high education rate among Chinese, the aims of the papers themselves – serving the special needs of their ethnic group,[25] and the concentration of Chinese in urban areas. In 1970, Chinese made up the overwhelming majority of the population of 19 of 21 leading West Malaysian cities. Only four cities had populations of less than 50 per cent Chinese.[26]

Circulations of East Malaysian Chinese newspapers were considerably lower with *Overseas Daily News* (14,300), *Miri Daily News* (14,000), *Malaysia Daily News* (12,000) and *Kinabalu Sabah Times* (12,000) leading the list. Other East Malaysian Chinese papers and their circulations: *Chinese Daily News* (2,300), *Sarawak Vanguard* (7,500), *International Times* (8,200), *See Hua Daily News* (8,500), *Sarawak Siang Pau* (3,500), *Api Siang Pau* (3,000), *Borneo Times* (4,358), *Sandakan Jih Pao* (6,000), *Merdeka Daily News* (4,500) and *Tawau Jih Pao* (2,500).[27] Besides being smaller operations, East Malaysian papers are relatively younger than those on the mainland, the oldest probably being *Chinese Daily News* of Sarawak, founded in 1945. Most of the others started in the 1950s and 1960s; a wave of closures before 1964 affected a number of less stable papers.

Although all but five have been wholly Malaysian owned[28] – and these five are

---

For 1970-71 circulation figures, see Jack Glattbach and Mike Anderson. "The Print and Broadcasting Media in Malaysia." Kuala Lumpur: South East Asia Press Centre, August 1971. They listed 27 Chinese newspapers – 18 of which published outside Kuala Lumpur – with a total 311,000 circulation.

23. "1972 Media Index July 1971-June 1972." Kuala Lumpur: Survey Research Malaysia. Surveyed were adults 15 years of age or older.

24. Or 519,000 readers.

25. For example, *Sing Pin* has provided numerous services to the Chinese community over the years, following the motto of its founder, Aw Boon Haw: "Whatever you gain from society should be returned to its benefit."

26. Ng Seng Kang. "The Future of the Chinese Culture, Chinese Language and Chinese Press." Paper presented to John A. Lent's "Journalism II" course, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Penang, January 1973.

27. Coats and Dyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33 Because most newspaper circulations are not audited in Malaysia, these figures must be used cautiously. For example, it is doubtful *Malaysia Daily News* and *Miri Daily News* doubled their circulations over a year's period in the early 1970s, as they claim.

28. Tai Sing Onn. "Chinese Newspapers." Bernama News Agency dispatch, November 14, 1972.

implementing the same local structure, Chinese newspapers have been categorically criticized lately by United Malay National Organisation (UMNO) and other political governmental groups as being foreign-owned, family affairs. Typical of these comments was that of the Minister of Health and Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) vice president, Tan Sri Lee Siok Yew:

> The situation is worse when you have a Chinese newspaper which subsists in foreign capital. How can we expect ardent patriotism to be created out of these foreign-controlled newspapers?

Lee felt Chinese papers have been too profit motivated; he admonished them to "put society first and profit second or the interest of the nation as primary and profit-making, subsidiary."[29] In June 1974, while setting restrictive guidelines for the press generally, the prime minister, Tun Razak, alluded to the Chinese press when he told a seminar of editors that he hoped newspapers which still had their headquarters in another country would follow the example of New Straits Times.[30] Of course, he explained, it was not necessary to implement this structure through legislation.[31] Yet, it had already been set down legislatively in a January 1974 amendment to the tough Printing Presses Act which states a newspaper can lose or be denied its annual license and/or printing permit if it is foreign owned.

It is difficult to understand why all the fuss continues to be made. The five Chinese newspapers with foreign capital had gotten the message nearly two years before. In 1972, *China Press* was 96 per cent Malaysian owned with four per cent participation by Singapore money, while *Sin Chew Jit Poh, Nanyang Siang Pau, Shin Min Daily News* and *Sing Pin Jih Pau* were wholly foreign-owned. That year, Nanyang announced it would offer 51 per cent of its issued share capital to Malaysians,[32] while *Sin Chew* and *Sing Pin*, owned by the Aws of Hong Kong, planned to meet government requirements by either going public such as *Nanyang*, or by forming a holding company with Malays having the majority of shares. A new corporation, Sing Poh Amalgamated Malaysia Bhd., was formed in September 1972 to work out these changes.[33] *Shin Min*, under government pressure, planned to either sell shares to the Malaysian public or to the paper's Malaysian staff, probably the latter.[34] *China Press* has not said publicly what its plans are. The fear of some individuals is that the Malaysian authorities wish to substitute foreign ownership and control with local controlling government or political party control. It is a justifiable fear since large English-language newspapers (e.g., *Straits Times, Malay Mail*) and Malay-language dailies

---

29. *Penang Star*, October 9, 1972.
In a nation where journalists are leary of disagreeing with government officials, the response from Chinese editors was to be expected. Wen Tze Chuan, editor-in-chief of *Kwong Wah*, said, "our main object is to serve the people and country"; Chan Ken-ein of *Sin Chew*, "it's always the policy of the *Sin Chew* to place national interests over and above other considerations"; Chu Chee Chuan of *Nanyang*, "The *Nanyang* is always conscious of its duty to work for interests of the country and people." Tai Sing Onn, *op. cit.*
30. In 1972, *Straits Times* sold 80 per cent of its stock to a Malaysian government agency, Pernas, which meant indirectly to UMNO.
31. *Straits Times*, June 18, 1974.
32. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 9, 1972; *Straits Times*, August 25, 1972.
33. Personal interview, Chan Ken-ein, chief news editor, *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, Kuala Lumpur, October 20, 1972.
34. Personal interview, Paul Chin, editor, *Shin Min Daily News*, Kuala Lumpur, October 21, 1972.

(*Berita Harian, Utusan Malaysia* and *Utusan Melayu*) have gone that route. In East Malaysia, especially in Sabah, the trend also has been to concentration of ownership in political hands;[35] in 1970, of nine Sabah newspapers, only three of the smallest seemed to have no direct link with a politician. In regard to the Chinese papers, the Alliance government partner, MCA, already owns substantial parts through its members, and it is believed UMNO, another Alliance cohort, may have gained interests in *Nanyang Siang Pau* since it went public.[36]

Although the big three Chinese papers[37] are now edited and published in Malaysia, they began as offshoots of Singapore dailies. This arrangement was not seriously questioned until the split between Malaysia and Singapore in 1965 and the Malaysian government's augmented power over the press since 1970. Before the governmental split, both *Nanyang* and *Sin Chew*, in their Kuala Lumpur plants, printed news and features which had been transmitted from their mother companies in Singapore by facsimile or blocks. In fact, *Sin Chew* had invested $2.5 million (M) in its Kuala Lumpur subsidiary to install electronic equipment to receive the paper by full-page facsimile from Singapore. Economically, the venture would have been successful, cutting out expensive typesetting of the intricate Chinese script[38]; however, the result would have been a Malaysian *Sin Chew* with only Singapore news. *Shin Min*, owned chiefly by Leon Heng Keng, a Singapore businessman, and Louis Chai, novelist-publisher of *Min Pao* in Hong Kong, was forced to open a separate Malaysian editorial department in December 1968, a year after the paper's founding in Singapore. Like *Nanyang* and *Sin Chew*, *Shin Min* still exchanges news and features with its Singapore office, but considers itself a separate organization with its own managerial and editorial decision making powers.

The magnitude of these three giants of Chinese newspapers is without question. *Nanyang*, for example, prints four editions daily in Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Malacca; a fourth plant in Ipoh was recently closed. The bulk of the paper (24 pages) is printed in Kuala Lumpur and shipped by van to the two regional offices where four pages of regionally written and printed news are inserted. To make its coverage more nation-wide, *Nanyang* sends 5,000 copies daily to East Malaysia, even though high freight costs make this distribution unprofitable.[39] *Sin Chew*, along with its sister *Sing Pin* in Penang, covers the peninsula quite thoroughly and is in the process of introducing full-page facsimile between its Kuala Lumpur headquarters and branches in North Malaysia and East Malaysia. Once facsimile is fully operational, the paper hopes to triple its 4,000 circulation in Sabah and Sarawak.[40] Besides its Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya offices and plant, *Shin Min Daily News* maintains branches in at least Ipoh, Malacca, Penang and Johore.

35. "The State of the Press in East Malaysia." Kuala Lumpur: South East Asia Press Centre, August 1970, p.1.
36. M.G.G. Pillai. "Malaysian Patterns." *Far Eastern Economic Review*. November 4, 1972.
37. *Shin Min Daily News, Sin Chew Jit Poh* and *Nanyang Siang Pau*.
38. Interview, Chan, *op. cit.*
39. Personal interview, Chu Chee Chuan, editor, *Nanyang Siang Pau*, Kuala Lumpur, October 21, 1972.
40. Great distances between cities in Sabah and Sarawak will nevertheless hinder full coverage.

Generally, Chinese newspapers in West Malaysia are better managed, equipped and staffed than most dailies of comparable size in Southeast Asia.[41] The growth potential is apparent in the fact both *Nanyang* and *Shin Min* recently moved into new plants[42] and joined *China Press, Kwong Wah* and *Thung Pau* in the use of offset printing. Both plan to utilize color printing. The pressing production problem most Chinese dailies face is obtaining newsprint. The 1973 worldwide newsprint crisis crippled Chinese newspapers, forcing them to increase their per-copy prices, decrease number and size of pages and budget more conservatively overall. Marginal papers, especially those in East Malaysia, were hit very severely. For example, *Sandakan Jih Pao* reduced its pages from 12 to eight and printed on green paper when its newsprint supply dwindled in July 1973.[43]

Staff recruitment (and retention) does not seem to trouble the West Malaysian Chinese press, despite relatively low wages. The papers are among the largest employers of university graduates – mainly from Taiwan schools – largely because of the priority system favoring Malay graduates in the government sector. A 1971 survey, which included seven leading Chinese dailies,[44] showed these papers quadrupled their reportorial staffs (from 59 to 242) in the 1966-71 period, at the same time tripling their subs desk (from 26 to 76), while for the comparable period, the eight largest English, Malay and Tamil papers saw an increase of reporters from 112 to 188, subs from 56 to 95. Yet, even with these larger staffs, Chinese papers, such as *Sing Pin*, resort to using "internal reporters" who tape interviews over the telephone.

Additionally, Chinese newspapers employ many more times the number of stringers than the English, Malay and Tamil presses combined; actually, 90 per cent of the 700 stringers in the nation work for Chinese papers. Whereas other dailies depend heavily on Bernama News Agency releases, the Chinese press must use stringers because the national news agency has not been known for its coverage of the Chinese community.

Despite a strong government suggestion that newspaper staffs should be one-third Malay in composition, most Chinese papers remain completely staffed by Chinese, many of whom are bi- or tri-lingual. The government guideline is unrealistic since not many Malays know the Chinese language, and with the priority given to them, they can find higher paying employment elsewhere. The training of Chinese journalists has been on the job, although the South East Asia Press Centre in Kuala Lumpur has initiated training schemes specifically designed for the Chinese press.

---

41. The same cannot be said for the East Malaysian press where there is a lack of middle management personnel, staff and inadequate equipment, with the standard method of printing being the flat-bed press. Blockmakers and printers must be imported, usually at inflated wage scales. Working journalists are in short supply because of the deficient training and the government information services which siphon off the good writers with temptations of better pay. The result is that most East Malaysian papers are little more than government information releases. "The State of the Press in East Malaysia," *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 5; H.J. Luping. "Talk on Problems of Newspapers in Sabah." In Jack Glattbach. "Journalism Training Course, Kota Kinabalu." Kuala Lumpur: SEAPC, 1970.
42. And by the fact a new Chinese paper, *New Life Post*, started up in Kuala Lumpur in 1973.
43. *Straits Times*, June 18, 1973; *Straits Echo*, July 27, 1973.
44. *Shin Min, Sing Pin, Nanyang, Thung Pau, Sin Chew, Kwong Wah* and *Kin Kwok*.
45. "Media Manpower Study." Kuala Lumpur: SEAPC, 1972, unpublished.

Functionally, there is a growing conflict between the role Chinese papers have traditionally assumed and that which the government envisages for them. Readers look to the Chinese papers to defend and maintain their interests[46] in pluralistic Malaysia where the Chinese community oftentimes is treated as a whipping boy. Newspapers, in turn, are caught in a quandary. For example, although *Sin Chew* supports in principle Malaysia's Second Five Year Plan, which assures special rights to Malays, it does question the plan's implementation, editorializing that measures should be taken to assure that it does not benefit only one race.[47] *Nanyang* faces a similar problem. Feeling a major responsibility to inform Chinese of what is happening abroad, as well as what is reported in other papers, *Nanyang* plays up – as do most Chinese papers – international news and is one of the very few Chinese newspapers which carry editorials daily.[48] Such policies are anathema to governmental guidelines for de-emphasis of foreign news. *Nanyang's* editorial page includes five or six daily opinion pieces translated from Malaysian and foreign papers and the paper's own editorials. *Sin Chew* runs a daily column which captures the gist of editorials in the Malay-language press. One paper, *Shin Min*, has discarded its editorial page because it does not "want to raise arguments with or criticize government policy" and it lacks skilled editorial writers. Rationalizing this policy, *Shin Min's* editor said Chinese readers do not care about editorials because they don't mean anything and are unlikely to bring about change.[49]

Because many of their readers considered themselves overseas Chinese, rather than Malaysians,[50] the Chinese press historically emphasized news of the motherland, Taiwan or Hong Kong. Again, the government frowns upon this editorial viewpoint, stressing that Malaysian Chinese should assimilate themselves into Malaysia's development. But the Chinese feel that as long as Malays are afforded special rights over all other ethnic groups, as guaranteed in the Constitution and Second Malaysia Plan, there is little room in the national setup for the Chinese. At a recent Chinese press seminar, sponsored by South East Asia Press Centre, a liaison committee was drawn up to bring about, in the Chinese papers, changes in these attitudes. Objectives of the committee are: "to help in the promotion of racial harmony by publishing more news of other communities; to instill greater political consciousness among members of the Chinese community; to encourage the Chinese to do away with out-dated economic concepts such as the family business and to provide more reports on the Government's economic policy; to provide more coverage on efforts to develop a national culture; to increase efficiency by modernising the present pattern of management."[51]

Although some Chinese papers have taken the initiative to report other ethnic communities in Malaysia, most of them still exist to promote Chinese culture and language. This has been more evident among smaller papers. In 1969-70, *Miri Daily News* claimed 95 per cent of its fare dealt with Malaysian Chinese, 3 per cent with overseas Chinese and two

46. Interview, Chan, *op. cit.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. Interview, Chu, *op. cit.*
49. Interview, Chin, *op. cit.*
50. Officially, 200,000 Chinese in the nation have permanent residence without citizenship; thousands of others are seeking citizenship.
51. "Pointers to a Changing Role." *Leader: Malaysian Journalism Review.* No. 1, 1974, p.5.

per cent Taiwan; *Kin Kwok* 80 per cent to Malaysian Chinese, and *Sandakan Jih Pao*, 40 per cent Malaysian Chinese, 10 per cent Taiwan and eight per cent other overseas Chinese.[52] Except for *Shin Min*,[53] all Chinese dailies give considerable attention to coverage of speeches of Chinese politicians and organizations, to the extent English-language dailies do not cover the events, relying instead on translations from the Chinese papers. To encourage Chinese youngsters to practice the language, papers such as *Sing Pin* and *Nanyang* pay school children for contributions to special sections.

Literary pages, important to all Chinese papers,[54] still emphasize the writings of Hong Kong and Taiwan authors, but with the continuing government pressure, are finding space for contributions from Malay writers. *Sin Chew's* policy now is to carry only works by Malaysian authors;[55] *Sing Pin* uses a great deal of serialized material obtained from sister publications in Hong Kong,[56] and *Kwong Wah* features mainly Taiwan or Hong Kong authors. A problem Chinese editors face in using Malay literary fare is that of translation; *Shin Min*, for example, sticks with works already in Chinese because it cannot afford translation fees.[57]

Another characteristic identified with the Chinese press – and which the government hopes to modify – has been its oppositionist nature. This should not be weighed out of proportion, however, because in a nation such as Malaysia, where the opposition is afforded virtually no voice in the mass media,[58] anything that has not originated from or been sanctioned by the authorities can be construed as oppositionist. Since 1969, the papers have been extremely cautious in their comments on government issues and policies.[59] They have to be; the government controls them and all other newspapers with a pervasive Sedition Act and Printing Presses Law. Under the former, they must, among other things, refrain from criticizing four sensitive issues: special rights of Malays,

52. Unpublished survey carried out on Chinese press of Asia and its assimilation role, by John A. Lent and Pai-min Chang.

53. Which claims not to have space for these stories because the people do not read them. Chin, *op. cit.*

54. To the extent that *Sing Pin* offers five serialized love stories, one continuing detective story plus other literary fare daily; *kwong Wah*, the following serialized stories: five dealing with fighting, three with love, one science fiction and one short story. Cheok Chye Sin. "Content Analysis of Two Chinese Newspapers and a Comparison Between Them." Paper presented to John A. Lent's "Mass Communications" course, Universiti Sains Malaysia, January 1973.

55. Interview, Chan, *op. cit.*

56. Rajan Moses and C. Mathew George. "A Comparative and Descriptive Study of an English-Language Daily – *The Star*, and a Chinese-Language Daily – *The Sing Pin Jih Pao*." Paper presented to John A. Lent's "Comparative Media Systems" course, Universiti Sains Malaysia, January 1974.

57. Interview, Chin, *op. cit.*

58. The opposition is not given time on Radio-Television Malaysia and only slight mention in Alliance-controlled papers such as *Straits Times, Malay Mail, Berita Harian, Utusan Malaysia* or *Utusan Melayu*. Because the government information services and Bernama News Agency do not report the opposition, most other Malaysian newspapers also are devoid of such news.

59. Two newspapers claim to have taken anti-government stands, although mild ones. According to the *Nanyang* editor, "I can't say we use strong comments about government. We put our views across. We report on the opposition but we merely report without involving ourselves in the stories." The *Sin Chew* editor said, "The Chinese papers on major policies do come out with criticism of government, more so than other language media. In certain cases, the government heeds what we Chinese editors criticize."
Interviews, Chu and Chan, *op. cit.*

the language policy, special roles of sultans and royalty and citizenship rights. The Printing Presses Law regulates that the government issues and revokes annual licenses and printing permits to newspapers and can do so without giving cause.[60] *See Hua Daily News* and *International Times* have had their licenses pulled temporarily during the past two years, *See Hua* on two occasions.

Because West Malaysian Chinese dailies have not been hit with permit or license loss does not preclude that the subtle ramifications are not ever-present. Editors work with two main criteria in mind: is this news and how will the government react to it? The latter probably is more important. A review of the problems faced by the big three Chinese dailies makes the point more forceably. The *Sin Chew* editor, for instance, thinks licensing is the main governmental control and he "appreciates the fact that the license must be renewed yearly." His staff's chief difficulty relates to making editorial decisions under the yoke of the Sedition Act. "So we have self-imposed restraints which are very frustrating," he said. *Sin Chew* editors meet with subs regularly to inform them on government policy, the do's and don't's and avoidance of sedition.[61] At *Shin Min*, self-control takes a peculiar twist; the paper does investigative reporting – oftentimes on governmental activity – but does not publish the findings. Instead, the editor tells the authorities what has been discovered and allows them to issue a news release which is published. *Shin Min* uses a large percentage of government releases[62] – especially on the Second Five Year Plan which the officials require be published – to "show our cooperation with government."[63] Additionally, *Shin Min*, like all Malaysian newspapers, publishes a daily Bahasa Malaysia language lesson which is required. The *Nanyang* editor takes a defeatist attitude concerning government restrictions, rationalizing:

> We have no choice but to follow the laws of sedition, licensing, etc. To a less responsible newspaper, maybe they would feel not so free under this government. In most of Southeast Asia, there is something like we have here. We just live with the policies. Anyone against the laws should have said so before they were enacted.

He admitted, however, that there were no opportunities to debate the laws before their enactment. Finally, he intimated the government's editorial policies were discriminatory, claiming, "if we published some of the staff *Utusan* does, we would be brought before the bar." *Nanyang* subs are expected to be alert to government policy and are briefed regularly on sensitive reportorial issues, especially those relating to race.[64]

---

60. For fuller report on the restrictions, see: John A. Lent. "Malaysian Mass Media: Availability and Control." *Index on Censorship*, forthcoming.
61. Interview, Chan, *op. cit.*
62. Apparently, not all Chinese dailies use large numbers of government releases. In a 1972 survey of the leading newspaper in each language group, Parameswari found that *Nanyang* and *Tamil Nesan* used the fewest such handouts.
    Parameswari d/o Sundaram Pillai. "Content Analysis of Government Press Releases Used by Five Malaysian Dailies." Paper presented to John A. Lent's "Mass Communications II" course, Universiti Sains Malaysia, January 1973.
63. Interview, Chin, *op. cit.*
64. Interview, Chu, *op. cit.*

To keep editors alert, the government ministers or their secretaries telephone most newspapers, asking them to play up or down certain stories and admonishing them when they have touched on sensitive points.

Other Media

In all languages, Malaysian magazines remain underdeveloped, mainly because they face stiff competition from foreign periodicals that flood newsstands. Chinese-language film and women's magazines, imported from Hong Kong and Singapore, are very popular in the nation; for example, *Milky Way Pictorial*, published in Singapore, commands a circulation of 22,000 in Malaysia. Hong Kong's *Southern Screen*, a monthly in English and Chinese, and *Four Seas Weekly* also sell a number of copies.

With the emphasis on Bahasa Malaysia magazines, it would not seem feasible to launch Chinese-language periodicals. For example, *Sing Pao Weekly*, started in 1969 by International Cultural Enterprises (a job printing firm which subsidizes the weekly), has a circulation of 10,000 to 20,000 and is published at a loss because it cannot attract sufficient advertising.[65] Yet, there is interest in the magazine market among some Chinese, especially newspaper publishers. *Shin Min*, which, like most Chinese papers, publishes a Sunday magazine supplement, is in the process of creating a weekly for high school boys (tentatively called *Young Man*), and monthlies for women and general interest. *Nanyang* already brings out a weekly supplement (*Saturday Review*), *Monthly Pictorial*, *Radio Magazine* and a series of books.[66]

One magazine that has been quite successful is *Women*, a Chinese monthly established in 1971 which features news about actresses and singers in Hong Kong and Taiwan and short stories written by Hong Kong and Malaysian Chinese. The only local Chinese women's magazine, *Women* is competing with *Wanita* and *Her World* (its Malay- and English-language counterparts in Malaysia), achieving a circulation of 30,000 to 50,000.[67]

The government owned Radio and Television Malaysia makes available considerable programming in the Chinese language. This has been so since the origins of broadcasting in Malaysia; when ZHJ was started by the Penang Wireless Society in 1934, programming was in all four languages of the nation.[68]

In 1972, of 463 hours and 50 minutes broadcast per week in West Malaysia, nearly one-fourth, or 100 hours and 20 minutes, was in Chinese, compared to 168 hours in Bahasa Malaysia, 97 in English, 92½ in Tamil and six in aboriginal languages. Of the 307 radio hours broadcast in Sarawak, only 43 were in Mandarin compared to 112 in Bahasa Malaysia, 45½ in Bidayuh, 42 Iban and 41½ English. In Sabah, the 126 broadcast hours per week were broken up this way: Bahasa Malaysia, 54¾; English, 25¾; Chinese, 18; and

65. Coats and Dyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17, 20.
66. Interviews, Chin and Chu, *op. cit.*
67. Lee Wai Keong and Venugopal. "Research Projects on Women's Magazines." Paper presented to John A. Lent's "Comparative Media Systems" course, Universiti Sains Malaysia, January 1974.
68. "Radio TV Malaysia." Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Information, 1971, p. 69.

other dialects, 27½.[69] However, the situation changed drastically in Sabah after January 1, 1974, when the officials in that state cut out all broadcasts except those in English and Bahasa Malaysia. The rationale for this decision was to unite the people and promote the national language.[70]

TV Malaysia operates two networks, Channels One and Two. Chinese, as well as English and Tamil, commercials are aired over Channel Two. Most of the programming of TV Malaysia is in Bahasa Malaysia or English. One Chinese drama, "Empat Sekawan," which warns of the "terrible consequences of gambling, superstition and dishonesty,"[71] is aired weekly, as is a feature movie shown on Thursday evenings.

An integrated news division services both radio and television. In 1971, of 50 daily news bulletins broadcast over radio's domestic service, 14 were in Chinese (125 minutes in the dialects of Mandarin, Cantonese, Amoy, Hakka), compared to 19 in Bahasa Malaysia, nine in English and eight in Tamil. On television, one news show (that at 8 p.m.) is in Mandarin.

The newly-inaugurated ETV Service in 1972 broadcast 37 hours weekly, 21 of which were in Bahasa Malaysia, 15 in English and 11 each in Chinese and Tamil.[72]

The main complaint Chinese have about Malaysian broadcasting is that it does not relate closely enough to their subculture. Being a government body, Radio TV Malaysia is deeply involved in promoting a national identity and consciousness, based mainly on Malay traditions, and therefore does not feel it should work for the retention of divisive cultural sub-groupings.

Since 1949, a Rediffusion network has operated in Malaysia, appealing mainly to the Chinese. In 1972, 99 per cent of the subscribers to Rediffusion were Chinese and most of the programming was in that language. A Gold Network of Rediffusion broadcasts entirely in Mandarin and Cantonese from 6 a.m. til midnight; the Silver Network uses other Chinese dialects and Malay and English. The networks claim 158,000 subscribers, 73 per cent of whom do not own radio receivers.

Until 1969, over 50 per cent of all Rediffusion programming was made up of popular Chinese stories; today, there has been a switch to pop music which accounts for 60 per cent of airtime. Rediffusion meets government demands to carry Radio Malaysia news and to air one hour daily of Malay music. Because the wired service does not have its own news shows, it does not run into conflict with the authorities.[73]

Finally, of course the Chinese community of Malaysia is provided numerous Mandarin films, usually made in Hong Kong. Most of the film industry of Malaysia is controlled by the Hong Kong corporations, Shaw Brothers and Cathay; recent moves by the government indicate this will change.

---

69. Jack Glattbach and Balakrishnan. "Malaysia." In John A. Lent, *Broadcasting in Asia and the Pacific*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, forthcoming.
70. *Straits Times*, November 1973.
71. *Straits Times*, November 3, 1973.
72. "Radio TV Malaysia," *op. cit.*, p.60.
73. Personal interview, Chang Kok Hwa, commercial manager, Rediffusion, Kuala Lumpur, December 27, 1972.

CONCLUSION

Possibly this is the place to toss out – and try to answer – a few questions on the path Malaysian Chinese mass media are taking. Appropriately, the first question should be: Can 26 Chinese newspapers survive? The governmental language policy, emphasizing Bahasa Malaysia, would lead one to believe that with fewer young people learning Chinese, many of the papers are doomed. However, the editors think otherwise, pointing out that many Chinese are bi- and multi-lingual and still others will become so, keeping the market alive for Chinese newspapers. Although the saturation point in Chinese newspaper circulation has probably been reached, publishers will be able to keep most of the papers alive because of the lucrative advertising market among Chinese (especially social notices announcing congratulations, condolences, etc.) and the fact Chinese papers are diversifying their interests and contents. We have already mentioned that some papers are planning to get deeply involved in magazine publishing. In other instances, editors are changing their papers' style and contents to satisfy younger audiences. *Shin Min*, for example, appeals to large numbers of readers because of its sensational, humanitarian approach to news play and its creative style of writing.

With augmented government pressures, even though most of the Chinese papers may last, they will never truly be their own masters again. More and more, the Chinese press will fall under the ownership of Alliance government parties; increasingly, they will be made to report according to government standards, not journalistic traditions.

What will be the role of broadcasting towards the Chinese community? If what happened in Sabah is indicative, Chinese broadcasts could be diminished as the government speeds up the implementation of Bahasa Malaysia. But it would be a long time off before Chinese would be discarded altogether as a broadcast language; there are too many people who know nothing but Chinese, and because the officials must disseminate their development information, they are not about to cut off their noses to spite their faces.

Asian Profile

ASIA'S INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
devoted exclusively to multi-disciplinary study of Asian affairs

Asian Profile is designed to promote multi-disciplinary research in, and the teaching of, Asian Studies; and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas among scholars both inside and outside Asia.

Contributions to the journal are welcome. They should conform to the "Notes for the Guidance of Contributors" on the inside back cover.

Statements and opinions expressed in articles published in this journal are solely the responsibility of the individual authors, and do not imply the endorsement of Asian Research Service.

Regular Subscription Rates

One year (6 issues)	U. S. $25.00 or £10, post free
Two years (12 issues)	U. S. $45.00 or £18, post free
Single copies	U. S. $ 4.50 or £1.70, post free

Reduced Rates for Students

One year (6 issues)	U. S. $15.00 or £6, post free
Two years (12 issues)	U. S. $27.00 or £11.80, post free

Copies can be sent by airmail, on request, postage extra.

Send subscription orders to:

Asian Research Service
P. O. Box 2232, G. P. O.
Hong Kong

Asian Profile is published six times a year in February, April, June, August, October, and December. All rights reserved by Asian Research Service, P. O. Box 2232, G. P. O., Hong Kong. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without prior permission of the publisher. Printed in Hong Kong by Pacific

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF CONTRIBUTORS

Asian Profile is an international journal, published six times a year in February, April, June, August, October, and December. The journal welcomes original papers from all viewpoints on all aspects of Asian Studies.

Manuscripts must be typewritten on one side of 8½ x 11 inch (or quarto) paper in double spacing. Only one clear ribbon copy is required. The maximum length for papers is 20,000 words. Longer papers may be accepted only in special cases. Manuscripts should be carefully checked before they are submitted, and should be preceded by a covering page stating the title of the paper, full names of authors, identification of each author (position and institutional or other affiliation), and mailing addresses for each author. A summary of about 150 words outlining the scope of the work should be included. Manuscripts must not have been published previously in any periodical and should not be submitted elsewhere until a decision is received from this journal.

Footnotes should be numbered consecutively and typed on sheets separate from the text.

Bibliographical references should be arranged in alphabetical and chronological order: In the text, in brackets, author's surname followed by date of work; in the reference list at the end of the paper, author's surname and initials followed by title of the book, publisher, and year of publication; or title of periodical, volume, number, date, page numbers, and place of publication. Title of books and periodicals should be underlined in the manuscripts.

Illustrations in the form of photographs and drawings are welcome. Photographs should be clear with strong contrasts and printed on glossy paper. They should be numbered consecutively on the back with captions typed on separate sheets of paper. Copyright materials must be cleared by contributors. Maps and diagrams should be neatly drawn on white paper or a tracing medium. The ratio of height to width should preferably conform to that of the journal page (7½ x 10½ in. or 26.5 x 19 cm.), and allowance must be made for captions.

Offprints of 100 copies are supplied free to contributors. Additional offprints may be obtained at low cost if ordered before publication. Contributors will also receive a free copy of the journal in which their articles are published.

Please send manuscripts for publishing consideration to:

Asian Research Service
P. O. Box 2232, G. P. O.
Hong Kong